Megathyrsus maximus

Megathyrsus maximus, known as **Guinea grass** and **green panic grass**,[1] is a large perennial bunch grass that is native to Africa and Yemen. It has been introduced in the tropics around the world. It has previously been called *Urochloa maxima* and *Panicum maximum*. It was moved to the genus *Megathyrsus* in 2003.[3]

Description

Megathyrsus maximus grows naturally in open grasslands, usually under or near trees and shrubs and along riverbanks. It can withstand wildfire and drought. The species has broad morphological and agronomic variability, ranging in height from 0.5 to 3.5 m (1.6 to 11.5 ft), with 5–10 cm (2.0–3.9 in) stems. The polyploid plant also can reproduce through apomixis, effectively cloning itself through seed.[4] Panicles are open, with as many as 9,000 seeds per plant.

Uses

It can be used as a long-term foraging grass if grazed consistently and if fertilized. It is well suited for cut-and-carry, a practice in which grass is harvested and brought to a ruminant animal in an enclosed system. Shade tolerance makes it suited to coexisting with trees in agroforestry. Some varieties have been used successfully for making silage and hay. The leaves contain good levels of protein (6–25% depending on age and nitrogen supply).

Invasive species

In some places, such as South Texas, Sri Lanka[5] and Hawai'i,[6] it is an invasive weed that suppresses or displaces local native plants and is a fire hazard.[7]

In the Australian state of Queensland, the Queensland Acclimatisation Society introduced Guinea grass to 22 locations between 1865 and 1869.[8]

See also

- 2023 Hawaii wildfires

References

1. "*Megathyrsus maximus*" (https://npgsweb.ars-grin.gov/gringlobal/taxonomydetail.aspx?id=447623) . *Germplasm Resources Information Network*. Agricultural Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Retrieved 2010-01-07.
2. *Panicum maximum*. (http://www.tropicalforages.info/key/Forages/Media/Html/Panicum_maximum.htm) Tropical Forages.
3. *Megathyrsus*. (http://herbarium.usu.edu/treatments/Megathyrsus.htm) Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20160304083522/http://herbarium.usu.edu/treatments/Megathyrsus.htm) 2016-03-04 at the Wayback Machine Grass Manual. Flora of North America.
4. Rhodes, Aaron C.; Plowes, Robert M.; Martins, Dino J.; Ng'Iru, Ivy; Gilbert, Lawrence E. (2022-11-11). "The invasiveness of Guinea grass (Megathyrsus maximus) is characterized by habitat and differing herbivore assemblages in its native and invaded range" (https://neobiota.pensoft.net/article/87069/) . *NeoBiota*. **78**: 25–44. doi: 10.3897/neobiota.78.87069 (https://doi.org/10.3897%2Fneobiota.78.87069) . ISSN 1314-2488 (https://www.worldcat.org/issn/1314-2488) .
5. Dhanesh Wisumperuma, "First known record of guinea grass cultivation in Sri Lanka, 1801-1802" (https://www.academia.edu/673618/First_known_record_of_guinea_grass_cultivation_in_Sri_Lanka_1801-1802) , *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka* 53, 2007: 219-22.
6. Anguiano, Dani (August 10, 2023). "Hawaii wildfires: how did the deadly Maui fire start and what caused it? Rapidly moving fires that exploded on Tuesday night on the island of Maui have killed dozens and displaced thousands" (htt

Megathyrsus maximus

Scientific classification

Kingdom:	Plantae
Clade:	Tracheophytes
Clade:	Angiosperms
Clade:	Monocots
Clade:	Commelinids
Order:	Poales
Family:	Poaceae
Subfamily:	Panicoideae
Genus:	*Megathyrsus*
Species:	***M. maximus***

Binomial name

Megathyrsus maximus
(Jacq.) B.K.Simon & S.W.L.Jacobs, 2003

Synonyms
• *Panicum hirsutissimum* Steud.
• *Panicum maximum* Jacq.[1]
• *Urochloa maxima* (Jacq.) R.D.Webster[2]

ps://web.archive.org/web/20230810010137/https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/aug/09/hawaii-wildfires-maui-explainer) . *The Guardian*. Archived from the original (https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/aug/09/hawaii-wildfires-maui-explainer) on August 10, 2023. Retrieved August 10, 2023.

7. Shingler, Benjamin (August 9, 2023). "Why Maui's deadly wildfires spread so quickly" (https://www.cbc.ca/news/climate/maui-fires-explainer-1.6932886) . CBC News. Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20230810202252/http://www.cbc.ca/news/climate/maui-fires-explainer-1.6932886) from the original on August 10, 2023. Retrieved August 10, 2023.
8. Clements, R. J. and E. F. Henzell. (2010).Pasture research and development in northern Australia: an ongoing scientific adventure. (http://www.tropicalgrasslands.asn.au/Tropical%20Grasslands%20Journal%20archive/PDFs/Vol_44%20%281_2_3_4%29/Vol%2044%20%284%29%20Henzell%20%20Clements%20221.pdf) *Tropical Grasslands* 44, 221–30.

External links

- *Panicum maximum* (http://www.westafricanplants.senckenberg.de/root/index.php?page_id=13&preview=true&searchTextMenue=Panicum+maximum&search=Wikitemplate) in West African plants – A Photo Guide. (http://www.westafricanplants.senckenberg.de/)